

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 /040 W

----- 070802

R 011143Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8349

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2507

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: DEBRIEFING OF RECENT DETAINEE

1. EMBASSY OFFICER DEBRIEFED ERITREAN BUSINESSMAN LIVING IN ADDIS WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED FOR ONE WEEK ENDING FEB 26. SUBJECT, WHO IS SECRETARY TO AN AMERICAN SPORTS CLUB, WAS SWEEPED UP IN RECENT WAVE OF ARRESTS. HE WAS ARRESTED AT GUNPOINT AND CLUBBED WITH RIFLE BUTT WHEN HE ASKED WHY HE WAS BEING ARRESTED.

2. HE WAS TAKEN TO THIRD POLICE STATION IN ADDIS WHERE HE WAS THREATENED AND INTERROGATED DAILY BY BOTH UNIFORMED AND CIVILIAN OFFICERS. BEING ERITREAN, HE WAS QUESTIONED CLOSELY ON HIS CONTACTS WITH THE ELF AND ACCUSED OF HAVING GIVEN FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE INSURGENTS. HE WAS THEN QUESTIONED ON POSSIBLE CONTACTS WITH THE ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION AND ACCUSED OF ASSISTING THE EDU AND OTHER ANTI-GOVERNMENT FORCES. HE WAS ALSO QUESTIONED BRIEFLY ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH AMERICAN INSTRUCTOR IN THE SPORTS CLUB.

3. SECURITY OFFICIALS WERE APPARENTLY SATISFIED WITH SUBJECT'S ANSWERS AND RELEASED HIM AFTER SEVEN DAYS, AFTER WARNING HIM THAT HE WOULD BE CLOSELY WATCHED AND
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THAT HE WAS NOT TO DISCUSS HIS IMPRISONMENT WITH ANYONE.

SUBJECT OPINED THAT APPROXIMATELY 2,000 PEOPLE HAD BEEN DETAINED IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS OF WHICH APPROXIMATELY 10 PERCENT, HE THOUGHT, HAD NOW BEEN RELEASED. SUBJECT WAS RELEASED ALONG WITH AN AIR FORCE LIEUTENANT, (IN UNIFORM), A RETIRED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, A STUDENT, AND A BUSINESSMAN.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST DEBRIEFING OF ONE OF THE RECENT DETAINEES. IT WOULD SEEM TO CONFIRM THAT AT LEAST A PART OF THE PURPOSE OF THE RECENT WAVE OF ARRESTS IS TO UNCOVER ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY AND/OR BREAK UP RUMORED COUP PLOT. WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION OF NUMBER OF DETAINEES BUT DEPT WILL HAVE SEEN REPORT THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS INDICATING THAT POSSIBLY AS MANY AS 1700 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ARRESTED.
HUMMEL

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Message Attributes

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